



## Regional Centers of Excellence in Food Supply Veterinary Medicine

**FEDERAL AUTHORIZATION:** 7 USC 5925i

**APPROPRIATIONS BILL:** Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act

**AMOUNT REQUESTED:** \$15 Million

**PRESIDENT'S BUDGET REQUEST FOR FY 2013:** \$0

**AGENCY:** U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)

**ACCOUNT:** National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA), Research and Education Activities

**TYPE OF FUNDING REQUESTED:** Programmatic

### **JUSTIFICATION:**

We are not graduating enough food supply veterinarians to replace those who retire. The Centers of Excellence will increase the number of DVM students to fill this gap. Five thousand large animal veterinarians are responsible for the health and well-being of approximately 115 million cattle, 12 million sheep, 67 million hogs, 336 million laying hens and 9 billion broilers.

The number of students graduating from veterinary medical colleges who enter food animal practice averages around 50 per year, which is 50-60 percent fewer than the number of replacements needed for the U.S. livestock and poultry industries. More than 750 U.S. counties with more than 10 percent of the U.S. livestock population have no veterinary services.

### **DESCRIPTION/BACKGROUND:**

The Center of Excellence concept maximizes resources by calling upon the expertise at multiple veterinary medical schools, who can contribute specific areas of expertise to a comprehensive training program that can be offered to students from other veterinary medical schools. Through this resource, students would gain appropriate training in food animal medicine with collaborating veterinary medical colleges. This would also save the large livestock and poultry producers millions of dollars by providing appropriately trained veterinarians.

Centers of Excellence would be coordinated between veterinary medical colleges and funded by 5-year, renewable, competitive grants. The goal is to turn out approximately 125 to 150 additional graduates each year to meet veterinary medical practice needs, and fill federal and state veterinary medical workforce needs.